

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please add new claims 27-33, resulting in the following set of claims:

1. (previously presented) A method for a system including a first processor, a plurality of checkout stations, each checkout station including a respective second processor, a respective third processor, and a bar code reader, the a method comprising the steps, performed for each checkout station to perform a checkout transaction for a customer, of:

- reading a first location from a customer card via the second processor;
- using the bar code reader to generate a first signal identifying a product selected by the customer;
- sending the first signal to the third processor;
- sending the first signal to the second processor;
- determining, in the first processor, a second location; and
- writing to the second location of the customer card via the second processor.

2. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the content of the first location includes a length.

3. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the content of the first location includes a value characteristic.

Claim 4 (cancelled).

Claim 5 (cancelled).

6. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the method further includes sending a financial signal from the first processor to the checkout station.

7. (previously presented) The method of claim 6 wherein sending the financial signal includes sending to the second processor.

8. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 further including sending a signal identifying a product from the checkout station to the first processor.

9. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the method further includes sending a financial signal from the first processor to the third processor.

10. (previously presented) The method of claim 9 wherein sending the financial signal includes sending via the second processor.

Claims 11-26 (cancelled).

27. (new) A method for a system including a first processor, a plurality of checkout stations, each checkout station including a respective second processor, a respective third processor, and a bar code reader, the a method comprising the steps,

performed for each checkout station to perform a checkout transaction for a customer,

of:

- reading a first location from a customer card via the second processor;
- using the bar code reader to generate a first signal identifying a product selected by the customer;
- sending the first signal to the third processor;
- sending the first signal to the second processor;
- sending the first signal from the second processor to the first processor;
- determining, in the first processor, a second location; and
- writing to the second location of the customer card via the second processor.

28. (new) The method of claim 27 wherein the content of the first location includes a length.

29. (new) The method of claim 27 wherein the content of the first location includes a value characteristic.

30. (new) The method of claim 27 wherein the method further includes sending a financial signal from the first processor to the checkout station.

31. (new) The method of claim 30 wherein sending the financial signal includes sending to the second processor.

32. (new) The method of claim 1 wherein the method further includes sending a financial signal from the first processor to the third processor.

33. (new) The method of claim 32 wherein sending the financial signal includes sending via the second processor.